



# ZERO BEAT

## NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



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### Spring Fox Hunt in Memorial Park

On Saturday, March 30, Ben/AB2SG, Karen/KF0INE, Derek/K0ATV, and Dave/N0DMP hosted a radio direction-finding fox hunt at Memorial Park in Colorado Springs. Derek's vehicle was a fox for wide-area hunters driving around town, and several smaller transmitters were hidden around the park for those looking for a pleasant stroll and to chat and learn with other hunters on foot.

Though there was a cold wintry wind first thing in the morning, the sun came out and the temperature rose as fox hunters shared tips and mentored each other. There were hams in attendance from the Pikes Peak area and beyond, and a wide range of antennas, radios, and attenuators were in use.



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## Fox Hunt Continued

Antennas included Arrow yagis, tape-measure yagis, normal whips on HTs, and a few of the magloops handmade by Ben and Karen's daughter were used to successfully locate hidden transmitters. Attenuators included fixed-value units daisy-chained together, step attenuators, active offset attenuators, and manual techniques like shielding an HT with one's body were used to find the transmitters as well.

The full results from the fox hunt are published at Ben's website, <https://foxhunt.info>. Keep an eye on his site and on this newsletter, as well as the PPRAA website, for future opportunities for learning and fun with fellow hams.





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# Ham Radio and the Total Solar Eclipse



Radio amateurs often have more than one hobby that deals with science; many are also weather-watchers or astronomers, for example. In early April, a few members of PPRAA indulged their "coronaphile" interests by driving to the path of the total solar eclipse that crossed over the US on April 8. Such an eclipse is a rare and natural beauty, and some say it can only be appreciated truly with the naked eye, so it can require years of preparation and travel planning to take it in. But while coronaphiles are making those arrangements, radio amateurs also have a unique opportunity to help ionospheric researchers collect data on the compression and decompression of the layers of the ionosphere during an eclipse. How does radio-wave propagation change? How fast do the layers compress? How wide is the impacted area? By using digital modes with decibel measurements, like FT8/FT4 and JS8Call, hams can take measurements that help scientists answer such questions. So the hamsci.org website partnered with University of Scranton, University of Alabama, Case Western Reserve University, and other institutions to solicit logs from hams before, during, and after the eclipse. They will crunch the numbers and be able to publish their findings on the effects of a total solar eclipse on earth's ionosphere.

Roger/W0MIX traveled to Killeen, Texas; Corey/N0HBO went to the Dallas area; Ray/KD8EQA did a Summits On The Air activation in Arkansas; and LD/W0XLD set up a ham station in Waco, Texas.

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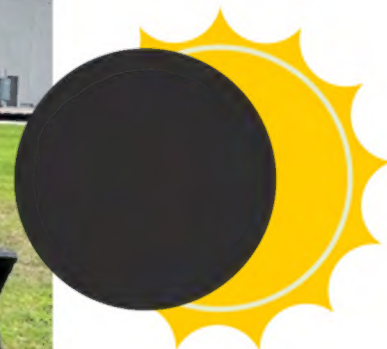


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Although the weather forecasts were discouraging, all were blessed with a break in the clouds and the ability to witness the total eclipse and the sun's beautiful corona with naked eyes. LD ran FT8 on 10 meters and made contacts throughout the eclipse, reaching stations in Poland, Germany, France, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, United Kingdom, Maine, Quebec, Vermont, New York, and even a few in South America. Logs will be submitted for the hamsci.org QSO party, and hopefully contribute to our knowledge of the ionosphere's behavior during an eclipse.



Wearing ham-radio-related tee-shirts turned out to be a good idea; we were able to make eyeball QSOs and befriend other hams from across the country who had gathered for the eclipse. In fact when LD discovered 10 meters was open to Europe, new friend Bill/KK4BXZ from Alabama was able to go to the parking lot and crank up his mobile rig to get a few of those countries in his log quickly before the eclipse.





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**Join us for the PPRAA  
Thursday night  
2m net  
147.345+MHz  
107.2 ctcss  
at 2000 MDT (8pm)**

Then, when driving home the following day, heavy storms and traffic accidents caused long delays on the highway. But 146.520 MHz was open throughout the traffic jam, and again, it was a great opportunity to make friends with more hams, to share eclipse-viewing stories, and to make plans for future contacts.

The next total solar eclipse to cross the US won't be until 2044. Who knows where we'll be in 20 years? But addicted coronaphiles may make plans to view other total eclipses in other countries, so let's talk about Spain or Iceland in 2026. See you there?

LD Steiner, WØXLD



**FREE VE Test Sessions**

**Saturday, 11 May 2024  
Saturday, 8 June 2024  
10 am**

**Pikes Peak Regional Office of  
Emergency Management  
3755 Mark Dabling Blvd  
Colorado Springs, CO 80907**

[ve@ppraa.org](mailto:ve@ppraa.org)



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PIKES PEAK RADIO  
AMATEUR ASSN.

# MEGAFEST 2024

Lewis-Palmer High School  
1300 Higby Rd, Monument, CO 80132

 **DATE**  
27 JULY 2024

 **TIME**  
8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

 <https://ppraa.org/megafest>



## Save the Date

**20-21 April 2024 0900-1600**

### **JPOTA Spring Support Your Parks Weekend**

#### **– Club AF0S park activation**

- Location: Cheyenne Mountain State Park (near the Falcon Amphitheater at the very top of the park)
- IMPORTANT – In all Colorado State Parks, a daily pass is required on each vehicle (not each person) entering the park. A single day pass is \$10.00 and can only be purchased at the park. Beginning in 2023, the State of Colorado introduced an option to purchase an annual vehicle pass for \$29 when renewing your vehicles license plates. If you have missed the window on including the pass with your vehicle registration, and would like to avoid the daily fee every time you visit a park, Colorado Parks and Wildlife still offers an annual vehicle pass for \$80.00.
- Please view the map under more info link.
- More info <https://ppraa.org/download/pota>

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## **General Membership meeting (8 May) will be both in-person and virtual**

- Location: Golden Corral, 1970 Waynoka Rd, Colorado Springs
- The business meeting starts at 7 PM, but get your dinner and beverage of choice and check in any time after 6 PM for a social hour. Club members check your email for info or email [Officers@PPRAA.org](mailto:Officers@PPRAA.org) to receive the Zoom information.

## **Pikes Peak Region Office of Emergency Management (PPROEM) Preparedness Fair**

- Saturday, 11 May 2024, 10AM-1PM
- Deerfield Hills Community Center
- 4290 Deerfield Hill Rd

## **Museum Ships Weekend Event**

- Friday June 1, 1800hrs to Sunday June 3, 2024, 1800hrs
- On Air
- More info <https://www.nj2bb.org/museum/>

## **Contact Zero Beat**

Do you have photos of PPRAA events you'd like to share, or news from the ham radio world that the club might like to hear? Please email [zerobeat@ppraa.org](mailto:zerobeat@ppraa.org) to share your ideas and pictures.